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made paper, noble margins, faultless rubricated printing, and artistically simple binding, the illustrations are very notable. They are, if I mistake not, from paintings by Mr. Dicksee, and not from drawings, as announced. At least, some of them certainly are, including the frontispiece—the "Balcony Scene"—the original of which I remember seeing at the Royal Academy in 1883; it was theatrically lighted—a greenish hue—which, with other defects, detracted greatly from its merit; a painting; but, reproduced here in monochrome, the picture is admirable. So, indeed, are nearly all the other pictures in the book, most of them printed on the same pages as the text. The general excellence is so high, that separate criticism of each plate is uncalled for.

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HERE we have what may be considered in book illustration as legitimate reproduction of an artist's brush work. The carefully finished execution of the academical school to which Mr. Dicksee belongs is such that the copy shows few blemishes which the after-handling of a photogravure plate—the idea that a photogravure is an *untouched* reproduction is a popular error—will not easily remove. For such work the new mode of illustration is well adapted. Not so, in my judgment, with such a book as "The Seven Ages of Man," just brought out by J. B. Lippincott & Co., which, according to the title-page, is "illustrated with photogravures from original paintings." Some, if indeed not all, of these "original paintings" appear to be only such monochrome sketches in oil as are commonly photographed down upon the engraver's block preparatory to his cutting. The edition before me is called "the Artists' Edition;" in the general edition, it may be remarked, the pictures are executed upon wood. The designs are of varying merit, and some of them, while in themselves forcible, it does not seem possible could have been made originally for the purpose of illustrating Shakespeare's lines. "The Infant," by F. S. Church, is a decorative composition, in which "the infant" is a mere incident; "The Whining Schoolboy," by W. St. John Harper, is not whining at all, but rejoicing in the capture of a bird's nest; and the "Second Childishness," by Walter Shirlaw, looks like a study for the mad King Lear.

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ANOTHER example of what may be said to be a fit use of photogravure in illustration is seen in the portfolio of "Character Sketches from Dickens," from original drawings by Frederick Barnard, brought out by Cassell & Co. The originals probably are carefully finished brush drawings in sepia or india ink. Mr. Barnard has given us here just what, from the novelist's descriptions, one would think he intended to make Pecksniff, Peggotty, Rogue Riderhood and the two Wellers. They all show character without the aid of caricature. The artist's Little Nell and Caleb Plummer and his blind daughter are hardly more than conventionally good; but not much more, I suppose, could be said for the originals by Dickens.

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JUST now that it is reported that Edwin Arnold is to visit America, it is particularly gratifying to note that the merited, though long-deferred, honor of giving his poem, "The Light of Asia," the appropriate setting of fine printing and first-class illustration has at last been accorded to it. Considering the great success of the work, it is surprising this has not been done before. The publishers, J. R. Osgood & Co., deserve credit not only for the excellence of the woodcuts, but also for the method of the illustrations. Instead of following the prevalent custom of the trade, especially at holiday time, of overloading the pages of a good book with pictures of trivial subjects out of all proportion to their value in the text, the more artistic method has been chosen of giving such illustrations only as are in keeping with the pervading spirit of the subject. The woodcuts are taken chiefly from photographs of Buddhist sculptures and frescoes found in the ancient ruins of Asia, averaging two thousand years old. They will be best appreciated by those who appreciate the poem.

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THE always welcome Christmas numbers of The Illustrated London News and The London Graphic are at hand, aglow as usual with numerous colored pictures. The large supplement of each being by the same artist, Phil R. Morris, one is tempted to compare the execution of the two plates. A glance suffices

to show the superiority of the work of The Graphic, soberly and artistically treated in quiet tints—evidently done from zinc blocks—over that of its rival, which presents only the ordinary, gorgeous-hued chromo of commerce, coarsely printed from the stone.

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TWENTY-FOUR colored designs for Prang's Christmas cards for 1885, by well-known artists, were exhibited at Reichard's Gallery last month, prizes for which, amounting to \$2000, are to be awarded on the judgment of dealers. Among the most appropriate, perhaps, were Frederick Dielman's, showing a group of pretty children looking out of a frame of holly, and W. St. John Harper's fireside scene of a mother and little girl embroidering a scarf, into which are already woven the words "Merry Christmas." E. H. Blashfield had a well-colored and spirited design of angels, with wildly flowing hair and draperies, announcing "the good tidings;" but unfortunately the angels look like a lot of frightened young women at a window, shouting an alarm of fire, an effect enhanced by the lurid aspect of the background. A good thing in angels would be T. W. Dewing's (or Burne-Jones's) gaunt damsels playing golden harps entwined with lilies, were it not that one red-haired young Irish woman seems to have served as the model for all.

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THERE have been comparatively few picture importations of consequence since the thirty per cent went into effect last summer. Excellent foreign paintings are to be seen at some of the galleries; but it is significant that at three of the leading dealers the show picture has been an American work from The Salon of 1884. At Schaus's is "The Quartet," the imposing canvas of W. T. Dannat, which reminds one at once of the picture by J. S. Sargent, which a year ago held the same position in the same gallery. Like that, it is a scene in a Spanish tavern, and represents itinerant musicians, except that in Dannat's picture they are the sole actors, while in Sargent's they were merely incidental to the principal figure—a dancing woman. It is painted in the same sober tone, the highest note being struck by the bows of bright red ribbon on the skirt of the woman's dress, as in Sargent's picture the highest point of color was reached in the orange placed upon a chair.

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HAVING said so much, the comparison must cease. What a fascinating picture Mr. Dannat has produced! The actors in themselves have only a picturesque interest; but, after contemplating the scene for awhile, one fancies he can hear the rough cadence of their song and the twang of the guitar of the fellow with his back turned to us, and the accompaniment of his companion's mandolin. Then we regret that the room in the tavern is only dimly lighted by the stream of sunshine coming through the broken slats of the Venetian blinds—only the stream is much too solidly painted for real sunshine—for, having admired Mr. Dannat's sound drawing and his skill in giving the textures of the clothing of the performers, we begin to feel that we should like to see more of their faces. But this was not the artist's intention. He has shown all we have a right to expect, under the conditions of the painting, and that we are so interested that we want to see more than this is, perhaps, the best evidence of the success the artist has achieved in his undertaking.

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AT Knoedler's was shown F. A. Bridgman's picture, "The Bath at Home," a life-like scene of an interior at Cairo, with a mother sitting on the marble floor of the bath-room, towel in hand, waiting for the brown-skinned little urchin to come out of his tub, which he seems strongly disinclined to do. The artist has cleverly availed himself of the opportunities for rich color afforded by the subject, and although the technic of the picture is, very properly, not obtrusive, one is bound to admire the skilful contrast of textures.

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THE third of these striking American pictures from The Salon is J. L. Stewart's "Five O'clock Tea," which has attracted a host of fashionable visitors to Reichard's Gallery, where it is on exhibition. It is, of course, a picture of fashion, and therefore somewhat frivolous in subject; but no one who will study it can say that there is anything frivolous in its execution. A more honest painting has not been seen here for many a day. The drawing-room to which we are introduced is decidedly Parisian, but the dozen ladies

and gentlemen assembled I take to be compatriots of the painter. Mr. Stewart has—for an artist—the unusual privilege of possessing a rich father, and lives in generous style in a fashionable quarter of the French capital. It would seem that these American friends have "looked in upon" his family. The composition is natural, the painting of the figures solid, the color harmonious and suitably gay in key, the handling free and sure, and there is, above all, throughout the picture a sense of air which relieves, to a wonderful degree, the objects in the room, and meets the difficult conditions of the perspective. This is no small thing to accomplish, when it is considered that the spectator looks right across the room to the large window which forms a great part of the background, and the artist has to manage also the light in the street, which filters through the partly drawn silk window-shades.

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HERE I am at the end of my space, and unable to speak of a tithe of the excellent paintings on exhibition at the principal dealers, with memoranda of which "My Note Book" is charged. As a month must elapse before the subject can be resumed, let me advise the reader to anticipate the critic for the nonce, by calling and seeing for himself. At Knoedler's he will find, among others, characteristic examples of Aubert, Bonnat, De Neuville, Rico, Schreyer, Kaulbach and Verboeckhoven, and of D. R. Knight, J. G. Brown and Edward Moran; at Reichard's a most attractive bit of genre painting by Berce Karlovsky, a new man of the Munkacsy school, and canvases of Robie, Madrazo, Chialiva and Lerolle, and of W. T. Dannat, H. P. Smith and Leon Moran. This list of names might be extended to include many admirable pictures at Avery's and Kohn's. But such an extension would not be much more interesting than Homer's catalogue of the ships. In closing, however, be it said that some notable foreign pictures, including Gérôme's "Lions in the Desert" and Vibert's "Trial of Pierrot," a water-color, were shown recently—amid much rubbish—at Matthews's auction room. They belonged, I am told, to Haseltine, the Philadelphia dealer.

MONTEZUMA.

Music and Drama.

"The night shall be filled with music."

—Longfellow.

Hamlet.—Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?

Polonius.—My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet.

THE Happy New Year which everybody now wishes for everybody else began for the theatrical managers on Thanksgiving Day. As suddenly as sunshine from a wintry sky a beam of good business brightened up all the playhouses. In spite of the rival attractions of opera in Italian and opera in German, and the social festivals of Thanksgiving week, the theatres were overcrowded for the first time this season.

I do not mean to say that the two opera-houses were not crowded also. On the contrary, both, like the first Mrs. Dombey, made an effort, and both, unlike Mrs. Dombey, were successful. Indeed, the operatic season at the Academy and the Metropolitan has been too brilliant to be ignored.

Colonel Mapleson, a veritable gambler in opera, began his game with only one strong card in his hand—the Queen of Song, the incomparable Patti. The Academy directors were shrewd enough to keep in their own hands the money subscribed to pay Patti, and thus, although the gallant Colonel grumbled at first, the continuance of the opera was assured. There was no great tenor, no great baritone, no great basso, in the Academy troupe. It was a case of Madame Favart and her dolls.

But if Colonel Mapleson be a gambler, he has good luck. In the middle of the season fate sent him Emma Nevada, a new American prima donna, who had made a promising début at Paris and had come home to be married. She consented to sing at the Academy, and made an immediate success in "La Somnambula." Presto! The situation changed. Colonel Mapleson became the bosom friend of his former enemies, the directors, and persuaded them to subscribe another fund to pay Miss Nevada.

Then the Academy season went smoothly along with Patti and Nevada, just as it did, a year ago, with Patti and Gerster. The Patti nights were called fare-

well performances, and extra prices were charged. The Nevada nights were called regular, and the prices were reduced. The directors were satisfied; the public were satisfied, and as Colonel Mapleson obtains the Academy rent free, has his stars paid for by subscription, and a benefit to defray any expenses for scenery, it would be strange if he were not satisfied also. Only that an impresario, like a farmer, never owns that he is contented. It might be a bad precedent.

Miss Nevada is a pretty, little, girlish woman, with a fresh, young voice, as silvery as the State in which she was born. She pleases the public, as Piccolomini did, not because she is a great singer, but because she is a sweet little woman. No matter; if one cannot have a nightingale it is pleasant to hear a canary.

But Patti is a true nightingale. She flies away now to Europe, Paris having been opened to her by her divorce from the Marquis de Caux; but she will certainly come back to us if she lives, and such a singer, the last of a noble line of artistes, ought to be immortal.

While the Academy was occupied with the Patti farewells and conventional Italian opera, the Metropolitan, gorgeously redeconstructed, took high artistic ground. Backed by a syndicate of millionaires, Dr. Damrosch brought over from Germany a complete troupe to produce opera in German, for the first time in this country, completely and unequivocally. It was understood from the first that there were to be no stars, and that every note of the music and every word of the libretti was to be performed.

At the commencement of the season the upper part of the Metropolitan was crowded with enthusiastic Germans, while the fashionables in the boxes and stalls groaned in spirit over "Tannhauser" and "Der Freischütz," and declared that German opera was a bore. But what is the use of saying that crinoline is inconvenient when crinoline is the fashion, or that tall hats are unbecoming when fashion dictates that hats shall be tall? The fiat that German opera was to be supported had to be obeyed. A splendid performance of "Fidelio" sealed the success of Dr. Damrosch's enterprise.

I will not repeat the names of the artistes engaged at the Metropolitan, first, because I am not sure that I can spell them correctly, and, second, because the singers do not deserve the credit for the triumph of Dr. Damrosch. The ensemble of singers, orchestra, chorus, scenery, costumes and management made the success, and, just as we say that Napoleon won all his battles, without thinking of naming any of his generals, so Dr. Damrosch has won all the praise for the Metropolitan victory.

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THE second Irving season at the Star Theatre, which was concluded in December, was remarkable for the same perfection of detail and general excellence which distinguished the first, and was even more pecuniarily profitable. Mr. Irving and Miss Terry were again the twin stars; but they were surrounded by a galaxy of capital actors and assistants.

"Twelfth Night" and "Hamlet" were the two plays new to the metropolis which Mr. Irving presented. He played Malvolio and Hamlet to the Viola and Ophelia of Miss Terry. Both of his impersonations have been severely criticised in London; both were heartily accepted here. As for Miss Terry, the critic lays down his pen in despair lest his praises should seem fulsome. She was as delicious in Viola as in Portia and Beatrice, and her Ophelia drew tears as easily as her comedy characters cause smiles. Yet to me Beatrice remains her greatest part. In Ophelia she seemed to make an effort to be sad, while she can be merry and mischievous without effort. But perhaps this is hypercriticism. Can I name another Ophelia who excels Miss Terry's? No; certainly not.

Mr. Irving makes of Malvolio a miniature Don Quixote—an eccentric gentleman, the victim of an elaborate practical joke, absurd in his vanity, but dignified when he feels that his conceit was excused by the forged letter. I do not see how any better conception of the character is possible. Surely none could be more effective upon the stage. At the best, the part is subordinate, the butt for the humor of the other people, and Mr. Irving does not give it undue prominence. It is not until you think over the performance that you discover how much he has made of very slight material.

His Hamlet, which comparatively had been a failure at Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago, was a popular success in New York. The crowded audiences went wild over his play scene, and shouted and screamed in an excitement almost as frenzied as the actor's. I have never seen a more genuine sensation in any theatre.

If the Hamlet of Mr. Irving disappointed me, it was, perhaps, because I expected too much; perhaps, because any Hamlet must fall short of one's ideal. I cannot agree with his conception of the character, nor with his appearance, nor with his new business, nor with his melodramatic effects.

In brief, Mr. Irving seems to me to act a melodrama, not a tragedy. It is a great performance; but it is not "Hamlet."

He presents to us, instead of the young, handsome, graceful Danish prince, the glass of fashion, the mould of form, the expectancy and rose of the fair State, a weird, gaunt figure, with pale, worn face, prematurely aged and nervously awkward. Instead of being insane throughout, after his interview with his father's spirit, or feigning madness, as the text suggests, he takes his cue from the phrase, "I am but mad north-north-west," and is sane and insane by turns. This is melodramatically effective; but is it Shakespeare?

For example, after his momentous conversation with the Ghost, he talks quite quietly and rationally with Horatio and Marcellus, and then goes through with the gibberish about "this fellow in the cellarage" and "the old mole" as if it were as rational as the previous lines. But is Hamlet in his right mind when he thus addresses the sublime spirit of his father, who has just vanished from his sight?

Again, after the play scene, when he has almost openly accused the King of murder and has worked himself up to a raving outburst of passion, in a moment he drops into a sober, placid colloquy with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and chaffs Polonius quite jauntily. The transition is melodramatically effective; but is it natural or is it tragic?

I object decidedly to the innovation of painting the portraits of Hamlet's father and his uncle upon the air instead of pointing to pictures on the walls of the castle or comparing the miniatures worn by Hamlet and the Queen. Shakespeare says, "Look on this picture and on this"—not "imagine this picture," but "look at it." The pictures are "the counterfeit presentments of two brothers"—not the creations of fancy, but actual presentments. Mr. Irving misses a fine point here, and misses it inexcusably.

I was surprised to see the Ghost walk into the Queen's chamber unarmed, in its dressing-gown. The original folio gives no authority for taking the Ghost out of armor. In the first place, the Ghost is armed because he is at war with his murderer and will not be at peace until he is avenged. In the second place, a Ghost that changes its costume and wears a dressing-gown in-doors is ridiculous.

If Mr. Irving desired novelty in "Hamlet," he could have changed this scene. It seems to me that the Ghost should not be seen at all in the Queen's chamber. In the first act it is an honest Ghost, a real Ghost. The soldiers see it; Horatio and Marcellus and Bernardo see it; Hamlet sees it. But in the Queen's chamber it is merely the creation of Hamlet's fancy, the result of his sudden remembrance of his father's admonition to contrive naught against his mother. The Queen cannot see it, and neither should the audience. What a great effect such an actor as Mr. Irving could make by addressing the invisible spirit and bending forward to listen to its warning words, the echoes of his own disordered thoughts!

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MR. IRVING has achieved much of his success by his attention to details. In "Hamlet" the details are slovenly considered or executed. He enters the Queen's door with a lighted torch, and appears on the other side of the arras with a lighted candle. He wears the same costume and the same inky cloak, in-doors and out of doors, when he starts for England and when he returns, although the text expressly speaks of the "sea gown" he has put on and represents him as "set naked" on the shore of Denmark. He shows us a forest in which grows no tree that the Danes ever knew. He costumes his people in silks and velvets, and puts a tigerskin under his throne.

Although the weather is wintry, he has not a single fire in the castle. There are no graves in his churchyard, except Ophelia's, and that is apparently dug out of the solid rock. A hill at the back of the churchyard scene is obviously covered with canvas. His fencing scene is all parade. These are only spots upon the sun; but a presentation of "Hamlet" by such an artist, after so long study and experience, should not be thus blemished.

Nevertheless, Mr. Irving's performance is great, as I have already said, well worth seeing, well worth comparing with that of Edwin Booth, the standard Hamlet of America. If I find fault with it, that is because the Irving system is not so strictly applied to it as to the other plays of his repertory. I judge Mr. Irving by his own standard, and this is of itself a high compliment.

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ANOTHER happy surprise for the New Year is the rejuvenation of Lester Wallack. He appeared, for the first time this season, at his own theatre, in a revival of "A Bachelor of Arts," and he was received with such a hearty welcome that he declares it to be unprecedented during his long theatrical career.

Twenty-five years ago "A Bachelor of Arts" was translated from the French by Augustus Harris, adapted by Charles Matthews, and successfully produced in London. When the author was called for, Mr. Matthews gave the first name which occurred to him—Pelham Hardwicke. Three years later the comedy was brought out at Wallack's, and Lester made a hit as Harry Jasper, the dashing hero.

Twenty-two years tell upon most men, and the question on the first night of the revival of "A Bachelor of Arts" was whether Mr. Wallack could play the part in which he was once so popular. Could he play it? He played it better than ever. Moreover, he looked it perfectly, and the fashionable audience literally rose at him as they saw their favorite actor apparently restored to his lost youth.

If you would learn the distinction between the old school of acting and the new, compare Mr. Wallack with the juvenile actors by whom he is surrounded. He is old enough to be the father of all of them, and yet he seems to be the youngest of the company in his appearance, manner, voice and movements. He accomplishes in comedy what Delaunay achieves in sentiment. This is the true art of acting, which triumphs even over time.

Note, also, the airy art with which Mr. Wallack delivers his witty lines; the intentness with which he listens; the tact with which he saves an unequivocal incident from becoming unpleasant; the easy graces of his elocution and of his gestures. Where do you find such characteristics among the young actors of the present day?

STEPHEN FISKE.

THE ivory original of the illustration on the opposite page of "Three Ladies of the Rushout Family" will be pleasantly remembered by thousands of New Yorkers as one of the most beautiful of the collection of miniatures shown by Mr. Edward Joseph, of London, last winter, at the exhibition at the National Academy of Design in aid of the Bartholdi Pedestal Fund. Andrew Plimer, a contemporary of Richard Cosway, is the artist. These pretty girls in white frocks and blue sashes were the daughters of John Rushout, first Lord Northwick, created baron in 1797. The eldest, the Honorable Ann Rushout, probably died unmarried; the second daughter, Harriet, married, in 1808, Sir Charles Cockerell, Bart. The third daughter, Elizabeth, married, in 1797, William Sydney Bowles, and was afterward the Honorable Mrs. Grieve. It may be mentioned that the mother of Sir Charles Cockerell was Frances, daughter and co-heir of John Jackson, of Clapham, heir to the estates of his uncle, the oft-quoted Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty in the time of Charles II., and residuary legatee of Mr. Hewer, of Clapham, frequently spoken of in Pepys's diary. Mr. Joseph is justly proud of his miniatures, and it pleases him to exhibit them wherever they are likely to be appreciated. Since they were seen in New York, we have read in the London newspapers that, at the desire of the Prince and Princess of Wales, they were sent, on private view, to Marlborough House, and also that at a recent notable art exhibition at Brighton this unique collection was one of the chief attractions.